GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:387
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LOW COST KITS FOR HIV AND AIDS
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have developed low cost kits for the treatment of lethal diseases like HIV and AIDS;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to spread awareness among the public in regard to these low cost kits?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (PROF MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir; two cost effective indigenous diagnostic kits namely Naked Eye Visual Agglutination (NEVA) of erythrocytes and Western Immunoblot assay have been developed. Both these diagnostic kits have sensitivity and specificity of more than 99%. The NEVA test can detect HIV-I/II infections in 2-3 minutes and it costs around Rs.20/- per sample. The Western Immunoblot assay confirms the HIV-I/II infections and costs about Rs.450/- per test sample. The identical Western Immunoblot kits cost about Rs.1200/- per test sample. Both of these kits have been launched in the market by Indian Pharmaceuticals Industries, namely M/s Cadila Pharmaceuticals, Ahmedabad and M/s J. Mitra & Company, New Delhi. The Western Immunoblot Kits have been exported to countries like Indonesia & Malaysia while rapid NEVA kit is being exported to Kenya and Nigeria.

(c) : The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have been apprised of the availability of these diagnostic kits for use in the sentinel survey for HIV/AIDS by National AIDS Control Organization. The industries also have their own marketing strategy for creating awareness about their products. These kits were formally launched on Technology Day on May 11, 1999 with adequate publicity. The information on these kits is also available on DBT Website.